



# Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries

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## L.D.W.F.'S ROLE IN THE AVIAN FLU MONITORING NETWORK

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) has developed an Avian Flu Early Detection Surveillance System to check for this virus in wild waterfowl and shorebirds as part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's avian influenza monitoring network.

LDWF's Avian Flu Early Detection Surveillance System will consist of collecting 1,000 waterfowl and shorebird cloacal swabs this coming waterfowl season as part of the broader Mississippi Flyway Avian Flu Surveillance Plan. LDWF plans to target species most likely to mingle with birds from Asia on breeding grounds or migration routes that could transport the virus down the Mississippi Flyway to Louisiana. LDWF will trap ducks, collect shorebirds and sample ducks and geese harvested on public hunting areas this fall to collect the swabs. Those swabs will then be sent to the Louisiana State University Veterinarian School for testing.

"This early detection system is a proactive approach to an unlikely problem," said Robert Helm, LDWF's waterfowl study leader. "The possibility of the disease arriving in Louisiana or North America via migrating birds is unknown, but the risk to bird hunters is expected to be very low. This monitoring system should give the public the confidence of knowing that the bird hunting opportunities in this state are safe."

Avian flu has two different types based on pathogenicity, which is the ability of the virus to produce a disease. The Low Pathogenicity Avian Influenza (LPAI) strain causes few clinical signs in infected birds and generally does not pose a threat to humans. The High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza (HPAI) strain is frequently fatal to the bird and is easily transmissible between susceptible bird species. The HPAI strain can pass from bird to bird and rarely from bird to human, but it is not considered a pandemic virus because it cannot pass from human to human.

The strain that is currently of concern in Asia, Europe, the Middle East and Africa is the HPAI H5N1 virus. HPAI

H5N1 strain has caused 114 human deaths from 2003 to May 5, 2006. Those people were from third world countries and presumably contracted the virus via unsanitary handling of infected domestic poultry.

The spread of the virus across Asia and Europe has raised fears it might spread into new areas including North America and pose potential danger to those who handle wild birds, including hunters. LDWF wants to reassure bird hunters that at this point the HPAI strain has not been found in the state of Louisiana or North America.

LDWF would also like to remind the public when handling birds to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Do not handle birds that are obviously sick or birds found dead.
- Wear rubber or disposable latex gloves while handling and cleaning game, wash hands with soap and water or with alcohol-based hand products, and thoroughly clean knives, equipment and surfaces that come in contact with game.
- Do not eat, drink or smoke while handling or cleaning birds.
- Cook all game meat to at least an internal temperature of 155 degrees to kill disease organisms and parasites.

For more information on avian influenza, visit LDWF's Web site at [www.wlf.louisiana.gov](http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov).

For more information, contact Robert Helm at 225-765-2358 or [rhelm@wlf.louisiana.gov](mailto:rhelm@wlf.louisiana.gov).

### LDWF Administration

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## L.W.F.F. SELECTS NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Foundation is pleased to announce the selection of A. Kell McInnis III of Baton Rouge as its new executive director.

McInnis will be responsible for managing the foundation's activities, the development of programs and services consistent with the foundation's mission, and all fundraising efforts. He previously served as vice president and general counsel for Louisiana Generating, LLC and as secretary of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. His active involvement both as a volunteer and in leadership roles with conservation-

oriented organizations is well recognized.

The Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Foundation is a non-profit public, charitable foundation, tax exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The goals of the foundation include habitat conservation, environmental education and training, natural resource research and management, and general financial assistance to the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries programs and projects.

*For more information, contact Adam Einck at [aeinck@wlf.louisiana.gov](mailto:aeinck@wlf.louisiana.gov).*



*New LWFF Executive Director A. Kell McInnis III*

## L.D.W.F. ANNOUNCES SAFE BOATING WEEK MAY 20-26, 2006

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) is pleased to announce that Governor Kathleen Blanco has proclaimed May 20-26, 2006 as Safe Boating Week in Louisiana and the State Legislature has approved a resolution highlighting this important water safety event.

In Louisiana and across the nation, May 20-26, 2006 will be recognized as Safe Boating Week as a reminder for boaters to practice safe and responsible boating by always wearing a life jacket and remaining alert on the water. Statistics show that nearly 70 percent of the boating fatalities in Louisiana are due to drowning and nearly 80 percent of those victims were not wearing a life jacket.

"Maintaining a safe and enjoyable atmosphere on our state waterways is a major goal of the Enforcement Division," said LDWF Enforcement Division's Colonel Winton Vidrine. "We encourage the boating public to wear their life jacket while participating in activities on the water."

Enforcement agents across the state will be highlighting safe boating activities as the summer boating season

begins. The Louisiana Wildlife Agent's Association has also partnered with LDWF to hand out free t-shirts to kids wearing life jackets when agents make random safety inspections on the water. The t-shirts are sponsored by businesses across the state and are inscribed with the slogan: "I Got Caught Wearing My Life Jacket."

LDWF encourages all boaters to enroll in a boating education course. Boating knowledge and skills are important in reducing human error and improving judgment while on the water. Those completing the course are more aware of the risks involved during time spent on the water and understand the need for precautionary measures that protect themselves, their friends, family, and others.

For more information on safe boating practices, regulations, or boating education courses, please visit LDWF's Web site at [www.wlf.louisiana.gov](http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov).

*For more information, contact Sgt. Rachel M. Zechenelly at [rzechenelly@wlf.louisiana.gov](mailto:rzechenelly@wlf.louisiana.gov) or 225-765-2984.*



## COMMERCIAL FISHERMEN RESCUED AT NIGHT

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Enforcement Division agents rescued three crab fishermen after their boat sank in White Lake in Vermilion parish on May 9. The three fishermen were identified as Michael Broussard, 35, Jeffery Ronsonette, 27, and Daryl Fluke all from Charenton.

At approximately 10:30 p.m., agents received a phone call from the Vermilion Parish Sheriff's office in regards to a crabber who had not returned from an earlier trip to White Lake. The wife of one of the crabbers stated that her husband left their residence in Charenton at 4:30 a.m. to move his crab traps from Grand Lake



to White Lake. Agents immediately proceeded to White Lake to conduct a search of the area.

Sgt. Aaron Monceaux and Agent

Derek Logan proceeded towards a small fire on the southwest bank of White Lake. Due to the rough seas, agents could not maneuver their patrol boat up to the beach near the fire. Sgt. Monceaux removed his gun belt and waded to the bank, while Agent Logan kept the boat from beaching due to the high winds and rough seas. The three men were assisted back to the patrol boat and transported to Talens Landing in Klondike.

Other Agents assisting in the rescue were Sgt. David Sanford and Agent Beau Robertson.

*For more information, contact Lt. Col. Keith LaCaze at 225-765-2988.*

## SEVEN FISHERMEN CITED ON ROCKEFELLER REFUGE

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Enforcement Division agents issued eight citations to seven sport fishermen for allegedly not abiding by the rules and regulations on a wildlife refuge by taking more than the legal limit of shrimp and crabs on Rockefeller Refuge in Cameron Parish from May 15-18.

On May 15, Johnnie Theall, 43, of Kaplan, was cited for taking more than the legal limit of shrimp. On May 16, Ronnie Trosclair, 39, and Curtis Oubre, 62, both from Lafayette were cited for taking more than the legal limit of shrimp. Oubre was also cited for taking too many crabs. Also on May 16, Donald Duhon, 52, of Duson was cited for taking more than the legal limit of shrimp. On May 17, Elisha Freeman Jr., 56, and Bruce Fruge, 60, both of Crowley were cited for taking more than the legal limit of shrimp. Agents cited Ronald Jones, 46, of Ville Platte for taking more than the legal limit of crabs on May 17.

A total of 107.5 pounds of shrimp and 556 blue crabs were seized in connection with these violations. The shrimp were donated to the Salvation Army and a local homeless shelter. The crabs were returned to the waters.

The recent cool fronts contributed to shrimp leaving the marsh and accessing the water control structures located on Rockefeller Refuge. Many of the violations were committed at the water control structures by fishermen using cast nets. The recreational limit on shrimp on Rockefeller Refuge during the closed inside shrimp season is 10 pounds per boat or vehicle and during the open inside shrimp season 25 pounds per boat or vehicle.

Rockefeller Refuge is located in Zone 3. The inside shrimp season is opened on May 22 at noon in Zone 3.

The penalty for not abiding by rules and regulations on a wildlife refuge is punishable by a fine between \$100-to-\$350, or jail time up to 60 days, or both plus court cost.

Agents participating in the cases were Lt. Remy Broussard, Sgt. David Sanford, Senior Agent Aaron Herpin, and Cadets Garret Kimble and Beau Robertson.

*For more information, contact Lt. Colonel Keith LaCaze at 225-765-2469 or [klacaze@wlf.louisiana.gov](mailto:klacaze@wlf.louisiana.gov).*





## RECREATIONAL LICENSES SET TO EXPIRE JUNE 30

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries would like to remind the state's recreational hunters and anglers that their 2005/06 licenses will expire on June 30. Licenses for the 2006/07 seasons will become available for purchase beginning June 1 and will be valid until June 30, 2007.

Sportsmen now have several different ways to purchase or renew their licenses. They may be purchased with a Visa or MasterCard credit card either by visiting [www.wlf.louisiana.gov](http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov) and clicking on "Online Sales" from the "Licenses/Permits" dropdown menu or calling 1-888-765-2602.

Local license vendors also offer recreational hunting and fishing licenses. Accepted forms of payment may vary according to the location. Licenses are also available at the LDWF Headquarters building in Baton Rouge, and at LDWF field offices in Opelousas and Monroe.

"Hunting or fishing without a valid license carries a \$50 minimum fine," said LDWF License Director Janis Landry. "LDWF wants to make sure that everybody is reminded that all recreational licenses expire on June 30."

*For more information, contact Janis Landry at [jlandry@wlf.louisiana.gov](mailto:jlandry@wlf.louisiana.gov).*

## SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA WILDLIFE ASSOCIATION HONORS REGION 5 L.D.W.F. BIOLOGIST WITH AWARD

The Southwest Louisiana Wildlife Association (SLWA) honored Michael Berg, a Region 5 Wildlife Division Biologist for the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF), with the "Sportsman of the Year" award May 5.

Berg, a 25-year Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries veteran, received this award for his work in managing the wildlife resources in southwest Louisiana and his work administrating LDWF's Deer Management Assistant Program (DMAP) and Landowners Antlerless Deer Tagging Program (LADT).

The SLWA was established 12 years ago with the mission of bringing people together as a positive influence in the enhancement and practice of wildlife conservation and the

enforcement of ethical outdoor activities in southwest Louisiana. SLWA has members from eight parishes in southwest Louisiana.

The group organizes events that recommend and support good wildlife management practices for southwest Louisiana and conducts an annual Big Buck Contest, which includes youth, women, archery, muzzle-loader and gun categories.

The Southwest Louisiana Wildlife Association holds an annual banquet with LDWF representatives on hand to give programs on upcoming seasons and other topics of interest concerning wildlife management and conservation.

SLWA started the Sportsman of the Year award in 2005 to honor persons who have contributed to improving

wildlife management in southwest Louisiana.

The first recipient of this award was LDWF's Region 5 Biologist Manager John Robinette for his work in the management and development of the wildlife resources of southwest Louisiana.

SLWA and the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries will continue to work together in the management of the wildlife resources of southwest Louisiana in an effort to meet the Southwest Louisiana Wildlife Association's mission for present and future generations of sportsmen.

*For more information, contact LDWF's Wildlife Division at 225-765-2346.*

*For the latest news, maps and information,*

*visit the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries web site: [www.wlf.louisiana.gov](http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov)*